

virtue or vice ; the number of occasions on which you have been disgusted or pleased, moved to admiration or to abhorrence ; the number of times that you have contemplated the town, the rural cottage, or verdant fields ; the number of volumes you have read ; the times that you have looked over the present state of the world, or gone by means of history into past ages ; the number of comparisons of yourself with other persons, alive or dead, and comparisons of them with one another ; the number of solitary musings, of solemn contemplations of night, of the successive subjects of thought, and of animated sentiments that have been kindled and extinguished. Add all the hours and causes of sorrow which you have known. Through this lengthened, and, if the number could be told, stupendous multiplicity of things, you have advanced, while all their heterogeneous myriads have darted influences upon you, each one of them having some definable tendency. A traveller round the globe would not meet a greater variety of seasons, prospects, and winds, than you might have recorded of the circumstances capable of affecting your character, during your journey of life. You could not wish to have drawn to yourself the agency of a vaster diversity of causes ; you could not wish, on the supposition that you had gained advantage from all these, to wear the spoils of a greater number of regions. The formation of the character from so many materials reminds one of that mighty appropriating attraction, which, on the fanciful hypothesis that the resurrection should re-assemble the same particles which composed the body before, must draw them from dust, and trees, and animals, from ocean, and winds.

It would scarcely be expected that a being which should be conducted through such anarchy of discipline, in which the endless crowd of influential powers seem waiting, each to take away what the last had given, should be permitted to acquire, or to retain, any settled form of qualities at all. The more probable result would be, either several qualities disagreeing with one another, or a blank neutrality. And in fact, a great number of nearly such neutralities are found everywhere ; persons, who, unless their sharing of the general properties of human nature, a little modified by the insignificant distinction of some large class, can be called character, have no character. It is therefore somewhat strange, if you,